WRP Work Plan Report

Attachment 6
2003 Project Evaluation and Selection

September 2003

2003 Update of the WRP Work Plan
Project Evaluation and Selection

The Wetlands Managers Group is recommending that 16 new projects be added to the 2003-2004 Work Plan. These projects were selected through an extensive process that involved the WMG, County Task Forces, and the Coastal Conservancy. The selection process included the following steps:

- **Request for Project Proposals** – The WRP sent out a request for project proposals to approximately 1000 people via its email list, and posted the RFP on its website. A total of 38 proposals were received.

- **Regional Meetings** – The WMG and County Task Forces hosted three regional meetings to discuss project proposals prior to the RFP deadline. Project proponents were given suggestions on how to strengthen their proposals, as well as on which aspects of their projects best matched the goals and objectives of the WRP.

- **Proposal Review** – Proposals were reviewed by the Coastal Conservancy, WMG, and each of the County Task Forces. Projects were evaluated based on the WRP's adopted criteria, which include ecological, feasibility and policy considerations (Attachment 6a). A project review checklist was provided to facilitate evaluation of the proposals (Attachment 6b). Each Task Force devised its own process for reviewing and ranking project proposals, ranging from informal discussions at Task Force meetings to numerical ranking based on selected criteria.

- **Project Evaluation and Review** – The WMG plus one representative from each of the County Task Forces then met to discuss the project proposals. A synopsis of the project review was drafted for each project. These synopses highlight the key strengths and weaknesses of each proposal and issues that need to be addressed. The project review synopses are provided in Attachment 6c.

Based on the evaluation and discussion of project proposals, the WMG is recommending that the following 16 projects be added to the Work Plan:

No.*	Tier	Project Name	Local Lead
3	PI	Dairy Mart Ponds Restoration	County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation
8	1	San Dieguito Lagoon Wetland Acquisition - Boudreau Property	San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority
12	PI	Batiquitos Lagoon Watershed -- Pioneer Land Property Acquisition	City of Encinitas
18	PI	Aliso Creek Mainstem Riparian Restoration	County of Orange
19	2	Upper Sulphur Creek Restoration Project	City of Laguna Niguel
26	PI	Orange Coast River Park	Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks
35	2	El Dorado Regional Park Wetlands Feasibility Study	City of Long Beach

No.*	Tier	Project Name	Local Lead
40	2	Arroyo de las Pasas Restoration	North East Trees
41	2	Machado Lake Habitat Restoration Project	City of Los Angeles
42	PI	Devil's Dip Creek Restoration and Daylighting	North East Trees
45	1	Topanga Creek Restoration Program	RCD of the Santa Monica Mountains
53	PI	Arroyo Conejo/Arroyo Santa Rosa Riparian Habitat Project	County of Ventura
57	2	Hedrick Ranch Nature Area Restoration Project	Friends of the Santa Clara River
65	PI	Arroyo Burro Restoration at Las Positas	City of Santa Barbara
69	2	Lower Refugio Creek Restoration	Land Trust for Santa Barbara County
70	PI	Southern California Creek Daylighting Program	To be determined

* Use the project number to locate the project description in Attachment 4.

Attachments

6a. Project evaluation criteria
6b. Project evaluation checklist
6c. Project review synopses from 2003 proposal round

Project Evaluation Criteria

Ecological Criteria

Regional Goal 1. Preserve and restore coastal wetland ecosystems

Regional Goal 2. Preserve and restore stream corridors and wetland ecosystems in coastal watersheds.

- Restoration potential/ functional gain – How much potential is there to increase the ecological function and/or value of a site, including the amount and quality of habitat or potential habitat for sensitive and important wetland-dependent species? To what extent will the project restore functioning of natural processes (e.g., hydrology, sediment transport)? Will the project result in an increase in wetland acreage?
- Connection to transitional/upland areas – To what extent is the wetland site physically and ecologically connected to transitional/upland areas?
- Connection to coastal resources – To what extent is the site ecologically or hydrologically connected to coastal resources, including coastal wetlands and nearshore waters? To what extent will the project benefit marine and intertidal resources?
- Self-sustainability – Will potential restoration improvements be sustainable through natural wetland functioning? What is the likelihood of future degradation after restoration has occurred? What level of ongoing site management and/or maintenance will be required?

Regional Goal 3. Recover native habitat and species diversity.

- Habitat Diversity – Will the project preserve or restore a diversity of a habitat types on site? Will project contribute significantly to regional diversity? What species of concern are known to use the site, or would potentially use the site if restored? Will the project remove exotic species and re-establish native species? Will the project restore habitat linkages and wildlife corridors?
- Regional linkage – What is the site's function and value from a regional perspective, including sensitive species habitat, use by migratory birds, fisheries support, and biodiversity?

Project Evaluation Criteria, continued

Policy Criteria

Regional Goals 1-3.

- Threat of future degradation/loss – Could future loss or degradation of the wetland or stream corridor be prevented through Wetlands Recovery Project involvement? How imminent is the threat?

Regional Goal 4. Integrate wetlands recovery with other public objectives.

- Multiple objectives – What additional public objectives will the project achieve? Is wetlands recovery the primary objective of the project or a secondary objective?

Regional Goal 5. Promote education and compatible access related to coastal wetlands and watersheds.

- Education/access value – Does the project include an education/interpretive element? Will the project provide public access that is compatible with the habitat and functional objectives? Are there education or interpretive programs onsite or nearby that will complement the project.

Regional Goal 6. Advance the science of wetlands restoration and management in Southern California.

- Research value – Is wetlands research incorporated into the project? What research questions will the project address?

Feasibility Criteria

- Site availability – Is the owner willing to sell the land or participate in a restoration project?
- Cost/cost effectiveness – What is the total cost and relative cost effectiveness?
- Funding – What funding is available for the project?
- Restoration/enhancement plan – Is there an existing restoration/enhancement plan that is consistent with the Wetlands Project's objectives and science-based criteria? Does it include a monitoring plan? Has the plan undergone environmental review?
- Technical practicability – Are the planned restoration activities technically and biologically feasible and practicable?
- Future management – Is an appropriate future owner and/or manager available for the site? Are sufficient funds available for long-term site management?

PROJECT EVALUATION CHECKLIST

PROJECT NAME_____

REVIEWER_____ **DATE** _____

Comments/Questions:

Criteria	**Rate**	**Notes**
1. Restoration potential/ functional gain (G/F/P)		
2. Connection to transitional/ upland areas (G/F/P)		
3. Connection to coastal resources (G/F/P)		
4. Self-sustainability (G/F/P)		
5. Habitat Diversity (G/F/P)		
6. Regional linkage (G/F/P)		
7. Threat of future degradation/loss (H/M/L)		
8. Achieves Multiple objectives (G/F/P)		
9. Education/access value (G/F/P)		
10. Research value (G/F/P)		
11. Site availability (G/F/P/U)		
12. Cost/cost effectiveness (G/F/P/U)		
13. Funding (G/F/P/U) % Match. Source of funding. SCC suggested sources.		
14. Restoration/enhancement plan (Y/N/U/NA) If Yes, does SCC have copy?		
15. Technical practicability (G/F/P/U)		
16. Future management (Y/N/U)		

Key:
G/F/P = Good, Fair Poor
Y/N/U/NA = Yes, No Unclear, Not applicable
H/M/L = High, Medium, Low

Proposals Received for 2003 Update of WRP Work Plan

Rev. #	Project Name	Applicant	Project Type	County
1	Dairy Mart Ponds Restoration	County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation	Restoration	San Diego
2	South Bay Coastal Habitat Project	Endangered Habitats League	Restoration	San Diego
3	Batiquitos Lagoon Watershed -- Pioneer Land Property Acquisition	City of Encinitas	Acquisition	San Diego
4	Aliso Creek Mainstem Riparian Restoration	County of Orange	Planning/ Restoration	Orange
5	Upper Sulphur Creek Restoration Project	City of Laguna Niguel	Restoration	Orange
6	Laguna Canyon Creek Habitat Restoration Project	City of Laguna Beach	Planning	Orange
7	Morning Canyon Channel Stabilization and Restoration	City of Newport Beach	Planning	Orange
8	Upper Newport Bay CBREP	Tides Center/Marine Education Project	Restoration	Orange
9	Upper Newport West Bay Ecosystem Restoration	County of Orange	Planning	Orange
10	Serrano and Borrego Creeks Watershed Management Plan	County of Orange	Planning	Orange
11	Orange Coast River Park General Development Plan	Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks	Planning	Orange
12	Shipley Nature Center Stream Restoration	Friends of Shipley Nature Center	Restoration	Orange
13	Bolsa Chica-Shea Property Acquisition	Bolsa Chica Land Trust	Acquisition	Orange
14	Bolsa Chica Channel Treatment Wetlands	County of Orange	Restoration	Orange
15	El Dorado Regional Park Wetlands Feasibility Study	City of Long Beach	Planning	Los Angeles
16	Rio Hondo Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds	Central Basin Municipal Water District	Planning	Los Angeles
17	Dominguez Gap Wetlands Multiuse Project	County of Los Angeles Public Works Department	Restoration	Los Angeles
18	South Los Angeles Wetland Park	City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation	Restoration	Los Angeles
19	Arroyo de las Pasas Restoration	North East Trees	Planning	Los Angeles
20	White Point Park Stream Restoration Project	City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation	Restoration	Los Angeles
21	Machado Lake Habitat Restoration Project	City of Los Angeles	Planning	Los Angeles
22	Devil's Dip Creek Restoration and Daylighting	North East Trees	Planning	Los Angeles
23	Bellflower Park	Central Basin Municipal Water District	Planning	Los Angeles
24	Gardena Willows Wetland Enhancement	City of Gardena	Restoration	Los Angeles
25	Ballona Wetlands West Bluffs Acquisition	Ballona Ecosystem Education Project	Acquisition	Los Angeles
26	Stream Spirit Rising: Restoration Education and Design of North Branch Creek	North East Trees	Planning	Los Angeles
27	Potrero Canyon Riparian Habitat Restoration Project	City of Los Angeles	Restoration	Los Angeles
28	Topanga Creek Restoration Program	RCD of the Santa Monica Mountains	Planning	Los Angeles

Rev. #	Project Name	Applicant	Project Type	County
29	Cold Creek Acquisition, Phase 3	Mountains Restoration Trust	Acquisition	Los Angeles
30	Escondido Falls Acquisition	Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	Acquisition	Los Angeles
31	Arroyo Conejo/Arroyo Santa Rosa Riparian Habitat Project	County of Ventura	Restoration	Ventura
32	Hedrick Ranch Nature Area Restoration Project	Friends of the Santa Clara River	Restoration	Ventura
33	Ventura Harbor Wetlands Public Art Project	City of Ventura	Restoration	Ventura
34	Mission Creek Red Cross Project	Santa Barbara Urban Creeks Council	Planning	Santa Barbara
35	Arroyo Burro Restoration at Las Positas	City of Santa Barbara	Planning	Santa Barbara
36	Ellwood Mesa Property Acquisition	Trust for Public Land	Acquisition	Santa Barbara
37	Lower Refugio Creek Restoration	Land Trust for Santa Barbara County	Restoration	Santa Barbara
38	San Dieguito Lagoon Wetland Acquisition -- Boudreau Property	San Dieguito River Park JPA	Acquisition	San Diego

2003 WRP Proposal Review

1. Dairy Mart Ponds Restoration

Rate: Yes

County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation

Incubator

Total cost:	$1,050,000	Total Acres:	60
WRP Request:	$850,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	28

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The project will conduct a feasibility study, design engineering plans, and install pipelines to provide reclaimed water in sufficient supply to facilitate the restoration of Dairy Mart Ponds in the Tijuana River Valley. The project will also remove invasive/exotic plant species in the ponds and the riparian habitat surrounding the ponds and will construct trails with appropriate signage around the ponds.

Project Review:

The project area has provided good quality habitat for resident and migratory birds in the past – WCB recorded 260 birds at this site. Lowering of the groundwater table has resulted in one pond drying out and water levels fluctuating significantly in the other. Providing an alternative water source and enhancing the vegetation would restore good quality, dependable habitat. Project area is part of the Tijuana Estuary/River Valley mosaic of wetland habitats, with good connectivity to salt marsh, riparian, and upland habitats. Budget needs refining.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Completion of Feasibility study (estimated in Fall 2003).	County
2. Updated cost estimates. Key cost components that need to be presented include: a) grading, b) plumbing c) re-vegetation, and d) irrigation/water costs.	County
3. Provide evidence that SD Wastewater Reclamation plant will provide guaranteed water supply. Specify cost.	County
4. Clarify the reclamation plant's motivation for supplying water to the project (money, meet TMDL, no place to discharge it)?	County
5. Clarify why 5 acres of exotic/invasive vegetation would be left after project completion.	County
6. Clarify how long the monitoring period would be.	County
7. Why has the groundwater table dropped? What will happen if the groundwater table rises?	County
8. What will be the effects on habitat of introducing reclaimed wastewater into the ponds? What is the quality of the reclaimed water, particularly the nutrient levels?	County

2. South Bay Coastal Habitat Project

Rate: No

Endangered Habitats League

Total cost:	$77,400	Total Acres:	1.5
WRP Request:	$59,400	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	1.5

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
This program will restore valuable wetland and upland habitats, and deliver an education program fostering appreciation and stewardship of these resources.

Project Review:
This project is primarily an education project with minimal habitat significance. The project is more appropriate for WRP Small Grants Program. Restoration/enhancement of the project area should be coordinated with the South Bay NWR restoration efforts.

Recommend that: 1) EHL coordinate with USFWS to integrate volunteer restoration program into South Bay NWR restoration project; and 2) EHL consider applying for WRP small grant next year.

3. Batiquitos Lagoon Watershed -- Pioneer Land Property Acquisition

Rate: Yes

City of Encinitas

Incubator

Total cost:	$3,100,000	Total Acres:	51.71
WRP Request:	$3,100,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	40.34

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The City of Encinitas requests Wetlands Recovery Project (WRP) Work Plan funding to acquire 51.71 acres of riparian and upland habitat within the Batiquitos Lagoon watershed. The site is contiguous to the Batiquitos Lagoon and approximately 340 acres of existing biological open space within the City of Encinitas MHCP Focused Planning Area**.**

Project Review:
Property includes two sections: 1) Approx. 4 acres located on the north side of La Costa Avenue contiguous with Batiquitos Lagoon, in the City of Carlsbad; 2) Approx. 47.7 acres located south of La Costa Avenue in the City of Encinitas. The property is targeted for preservation in the MHCP focused planning area document. The 4 acre parcel is primarily wetland habitat. Acquisition of this parcel would increase the protected wetland habitat of Batiquitos Lagoon and clearly fits with WRP priorities. The 47.7 acre parcel includes approximately 7 acres of wetland/riparian habitat. La Costa Avenue serves as a significant barrier between the 47.7 acre parcel and Batiquitos Lagoon, which makes the potential value of the property for WRP purposes less clear.. Property could potentially be used for pre-treating the water in Encinitas Creek, the main tributary to Batiquitos Lagoon. The property would connect three large areas of protected open space south of the lagoon. Most of this open space is upland habitat with pockets of upland habitat. The proposal states that post-project wetland acreage would be 40.34 acres, but it is not clear where those acres would be or what type of habitat. Cost per acre ($60,000/acre) is high for acquisition of wetlands.

WRP contribution should be limited given that much of the property is upland with limited benefits to the lagoon ecosystem.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Need to secure matching funds.	City
2. Need to determine appropriate level of WRP contribution given that much of the property is wetland.	WMG/SCC
3. What are the opportunities for establishing a wildlife corridor under the La Costa Avenue?	City/SCC
4. What are the opportunities for wetland restoration on the site.	City/SCC
5. Will WCB contributed since it is an MHCP property?	City

4. Aliso Creek Mainstem Riparian Restoration

Rate: Yes

County of Orange

Incubator

Total cost:	$25,000,000	Total Acres:	4236
WRP Request:	$675,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	70

Project Summary (provided by applicant):

Restore native riparian wetland habitat in the County of Orange-owned regional parks: Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park, along Aliso Creek from Moulton Parkway to the South Coast Water District Treatment Plant Bridge at the lower end of Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park. Reduce serious stream downcutting and stabilize the streambed by creating a series of pool and riffle structures. The pools and riffles will raise the water level in the stream during non-flood stages and increase surrounding soil moisture. Replace exotic invasive plants with native plants. Improvement of the riparian habitat will encourage the diversity and abundance of wildlife along the Aliso Creek corridor that stretches from the Cleveland National Forest almost 30 miles across Orange County to the Pacific Ocean.

Project Review:

Project was developed through the ACOE/County Aliso Creek Watershed Management Feasibility Study. Proposal summary states that project will restore habitat in Wood Canyon; however, follow-up with the County confirmed that Wood Canyon is not included in the mainstem phase of the project. The lower half of the mainstem project would be within the Aliso Creek Wilderness Preserve and supports good quality riparian habitat. The creek is heavily eroded and will continue to degrade without some intervention. Project cost per stream mile is very expensive. None of the matching funds have been secured. WRP funding would be used as local share match to complete project design plans and permitting.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Secure matching funds. WRP should not provide planning funds until, and unless, construction grants from SWRCB and DWR are approved and ACOE planning money is secured.	County
2. Wood Canyon restoration project is already on the Work Plan and is a higher priority for WRP funding in this watershed. WRP should not provide planning funds for the mainstem project until the County/ACOE has commenced the Wood Canyon project.	County/ ACOE
3. Previous stabilization project in this creek has failed and caused additional damage. To avoid a repeat of this, project design should be peer reviewed. In particular, the review should consider whether 6-8 foot drop structures ("pool and riffle structures") are the best option for stabilizing the creek.	SCC/ACOE/ County
4. What is being done in the watershed to address the causes rather than the symptoms?	County
5. Project needs to be coordinated with large water district pipeline project.	County/ ACOE

5. Upper Sulphur Creek Restoration Project

Rate: Yes

City of Laguna Niguel

Total cost:	$1,193,780	Total Acres:	27.7
WRP Request:	$105,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	14.2

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
This project will team up the City, three Homeowners Associations (HOA's) and groups of volunteers to restore up to 28 acres of wildlife habitat as native wetland, transitional and scrub plant communities along a 1.7-mile stream corridor through a suburban zone. Existing concrete v-ditches, irrigated ornamental landscaping, and invasive weedy species will be eliminated and interpretive facilities will be added, thereby benefiting wildlife habitat and connectivity, water conservation, water quality and educational opportunities.

Project Review:

The project would remove 3600 feet of concrete, which would be a significant hydrological improvement and could benefit riparian habitat in lower Aliso Creek. Surrounding land use is completely developed, so direct habitat gains would not be great. Project would be with a new local partner and could encourage better long-term creek stewardship by the city. Preservation and restoration of Wood Canyon should be the WRP's highest priority in this watershed. The WRP would contribute less than 10% of the project costs, which is more than proportional to the habitat gains. All of the matching funds have been confirmed.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Who will take responsibility for the future operation and maintenance of the creek? It should be the City, not the HOA's.	City
2. How does this project relate to the ACOE's other project on Sulphur Creek?	City

6. Laguna Canyon Creek Habitat Restoration Project

Rate: No

City of Laguna Beach

Total cost:	$750,000	Total Acres:	5
WRP Request:	$100,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	TBD

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The project objective is to complete the detailed planning and bidding documents necessary to restore about 4,000 lineal-feet of natural riparian habitat and improve the overall health and quality of the creek to protect the San Diego Basin Plan WARM, WILD, AND REC beneficial use designations. In addition, the proposed project seeks to facilitate community involvement in watershed management and pollution prevention through public education and outreach activities.

Project Review:
The project is not well-described. It is not clear what the problems are or what the gains would be. Creek is across Laguna Canyon Road from the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Project budget is actually $100,000 for planning tasks and $650,000 for implementation. It is not clear what the implementation cost estimate is based on, since there is no plan yet.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Need to develop a clearer project description, including problems to be addressed and restoration goals.	City/SCC
2. How big a barrier to habitat connectivity is Laguna Canyon Road?	SCC/WMG

Recommend that City consider re-submitting proposal when project is better defined. City should coordinate with Conservancy staff before doing this.

7. Morning Canyon Channel Stabilization and Restoration Plan

Rate: No

City of Newport Beach

Total cost:	$517,000	Total Acres:	
WRP Request:	$400,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	1.

Project Summary (provided by applicant):

The proposed project includes the planning (including stakeholder process), detailed design, permitting, and CEQA review for:

1. Stabilizing upper Morning Canyon Channel and restoring riparian habitat, and
2. Providing ranger controlled access to a public beach, currently only accessible along the shoreline at low tide, by modifying a gated City service road on lower Morning Canyon. From this entry point, guided interpretive walks will be offered to educate visitors on the relationship between watershed health and the health of the adjacent marine life refuge. This planning task will be accompanied by a preliminary evaluation of wetland habitat conditions on the lower canyon and establishment of baseline ecological status of the beach and intertidal environment to serve as a standard for future monitoring of any potential ecological impacts arising from the proposed interpretive walks.

Project Review:

Morning Canyon Channel is an urban stream in relatively natural condition. Investing in stabilization now could keep it from being placed in concrete. Habitat gains would be minimal. The project is rather expensive for such a small benefit. Other potential sources of funding for this project include the DWR urban streams program and the SWRCB watershed grants.

8. Upper Newport Bay CBREP

Rate: No

Tides Center/Marine Education Project

Total cost:	$393,458	Total Acres:	14.5
WRP Request:	$243,320	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	1.5

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The CBREP will implement existing site-specific plans to restore, monitor, and maintain salt marsh, riparian, marsh/scrub ecotone, and coastal sage scrub habitat at Upper Newport Bay. The restoration work will be carried out by community volunteers and students and will involve invasive species eradication and native seed collection, propagation, and planting for the benefit of endangered plant and bird species.

Project Review:
Project focuses primarily on upland/transitional habitat around perimeter of Upper Newport Bay. Project would enhance UNB by improving this contiguous upland habitat, but other projects should have higher priority for WRP funding and staff time (i.e., ACOE Ecosystem Restoration Project and Big Canyon Restoration). Project would be done primarily by volunteers and would further community involvement objectives. About 50% of requested amount is for staff time, and 10% is for unexplained fiscal agent fee.

Applicant is a relatively new organization working in Upper Newport Bay and does not have stable funding for staff. For this reason, they are not necessarily the best organization to undertake long-term volunteer vegetation enhancement and maintenance activities. WRP may want to review UNB groups and target one or two for long-term capacity building for this type of activity.

Recommend that this project, or a similar one, be resubmitted when the ACOE Ecosystem Restoration Project and Big Canyon Restoration are nearer to completion.

9. Upper Newport West Bay Ecosystem Restoration

Rate: No

County of Orange

Total cost:	$775,000	Total Acres:	25
WRP Request:	$200,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	9

Project Summary (provided by applicant):

This multi-purpose collaborative project involving numerous and varied stakeholders will: Remove non-native vegetation; Restore eroding and currently barren bluffs, drainages and upland areas with native Newport Bay [sic]; Develop and improve a comprehensive trail and access system; Integrate public outreach and education; Improve public safety; Remove nine acres of historic dredge spoil material at the base of Santa Isabel Channel and recreate a wetland; Research the sub watersheds draining to the West Bay across Irvine Avenue and develop a plan for reducing their pollution of Newport Bay, and Develop plan for ongoing project maintenance emphasizing sustainability.

Project Review:

Project focuses primarily on upland/transitional habitat around perimeter of Upper Newport Bay. Project would enhance UNB by improving this contiguous upland habitat, but other projects should have higher priority for WRP funding and staff time (i.e., ACOE Ecosystem Restoration Project and Big Canyon Restoration). Insufficient detail is provided to justify the budget which seems extremely high for this stage of the planning.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. The proposed project and its relationship to City of Newport's project needs to be described more clearly.	County
2. Budget needs more detail.	County
3. Is an elevated boardwalk the only option being considered for directing access? Other options, including use of vegetation, may provide better results for directing access at a lower cost. Given high cost of an elevated boardwalk and questionable effectiveness at achieving purpose, plan should look at other options.	County
4. Can project be combined with the City of Newport Beach's project just inland to achieve cost and time efficiencies?	City/County

Recommend that this project, or a similar one, be resubmitted when the ACOE Ecosystem Restoration Project and Big Canyon Restoration are nearer to completion. Proposal should be revised to better explain proposed project, related projects, and budget.

10. Serrano and Borrego Creeks Watershed Management Plan

Rate: No

County of Orange

Total cost:	$910,000	Total Acres:	8800
WRP Request:	$135,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The goal of this project is to develop a multi-objective, integrated, highly collaborative Watershed Management Plan which focuses in detail on maintaining, restoring and enhancing healthy Serrano and Borrego Creeks Watersheds. The watershed plan will also result in reduced flooding, protection for sensitive species, enhanced terrestrial and aquatic habitat, and improved quality of life for the local community through improved recreational opportunities, cleaner creeks and water, and an improvement in the aesthetics of the natural surroundings. Implementation of the plan will improve water quality and benefit the TMDL process by developing projects that will help reduce excessive erosion, nutrients, fecal coliforms, toxic substances and trash on a regional basis in the watershed area.

Project Review:
The San Diego Creek Watershed Management Feasibility Study, San Diego Creek SAMP, and the Serrano Creek restoration plan are more than enough studies for this one area. The WRP should focus it efforts on implementing the priority restoration and acquisition projects identified in these plans.

Recommend that the County review the priorities in these plans and submit a proposal to complete design plans and implement the priority project which best meets the goals of the WRP. County could outline an action plan of several priority projects – restoration and acquisition – and submit that to the WRP for consideration of adding a long-term programmatic effort for the San Diego Creek watershed to the WRP Work Plan.

11. Orange Coast River Park General Development Plan

Rate: Yes

Friends of Harbors, Beaches, and Parks — Incubator

Total cost:	$746,000	Total Acres:	1000
WRP Request:	$112,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The goal of this 1,000 acre project is to complete a General Development Plan (GDP) and develop a detailed action plan for a 1000 acre river park at the mouth of the Santa Ana River by assembling a patchwork quilt of lands owned and individually managed by three cities (Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach and Newport Beach); the County of Orange; several regional, state and federal agencies; and a few private entities. The park concept includes extensive restoration of the riparian corridor with native plants, and the completion of restoration of the coastal salt marshes and dunes. Goals include restoration of an "ecological staircase" of vegetation along the river for the benefit of wildlife and a seamless passageway of hiking and biking trails to provide coastal access. It would create an oasis of tranquility within a high-density urban area for the benefit of wildlife and humans alike.

Project Review:
This area offers a rare opportunity in coastal LA/Orange counties to have a continuum of wetland habitat types from intertidal salt marsh, riparian, freshwater marsh, seasonal marshes, to vernal pools on the Fairview Park bluffs. An overarching conceptual plan for the Orange Coast River Park has already been developed, as well as several plans for individual pieces of the OCRP. A general development plan is not needed for this area – it would be redundant:

- Fairview Park final design is complete. *Ready for construction.*
- North Talbert Park has been restored. *Potential for limited enhancement.*
- South Talbert Park – *restoration plan needed*
- Banning Ranch – property is privately owned. Planning should begin once acquired by a public agency.
- Huntington Beach Wetlands – A comprehensive planning effort for the entire Huntington Beach wetlands area is already being coordinated.

Recommend adding the Orange Coast River Park to the WRP Work Plan, but not funding preparation of a general development plan. WRP funding should be directed to areas of the OCRP development that are not already being actively addressed.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Develop an action plan for realizing the OCRP that incorporates the work already completed or underway on individual pieces of the park.	FHBP
2. Develop a coordinated management strategy and get local agencies to commit to it. Management strategy should address habitat, access/trails, interpretation and other key issues.	FHBP/Local agencies/ SCC
3. Develop and implement a scope of work to prepare a restoration plan for South Talbert Park.	County/SCC
4. Implement Fairview Park restoration.	City/SCC

12. Shipley Nature Center Stream Restoration

Rate: No

Friends of Shipley Nature Center

Total cost:	$126,500	Total Acres:	18
WRP Request:	$93,400	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	9.1

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
As part of an overall project to improve wildlife habitat in Shipley Nature Center in Huntington Beach Central Park, we will restore hydrologic functioning to the historic freshwater wetlands that exist on site. For this subproject, the Friends of Shipley Nature Center will restore to the site two streams, two detention ponds, and two vernal pools in order to improve habitat for endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, and to create habitat for fairy shrimp, some local species of which are endangered. These hydrologic features will replace the functions formerly provided by historic Freeman Creek, which was lost to urban development long ago, and will provide important interpretive elements for the school groups that tour the site.

Project Review:
Proposed project is too artificial with minimal habitat gains. It includes creation of a waterfall, circulating stream, and plumbing system to "turn water on and off." Project has strong community support and involvement. The project seems closely related to the East Garden Grove Wintersburg Channel Treatment Wetland project which is already on the Work Plan.

Recommend that the Friends of Shipley Nature Center coordinate with the City of Huntington Beach to incorporate some of the invasive species removal/revegetation elements of this project into the EGGWC Treatment Wetland project.

13. Bolsa Chica-Shea Property Acquisition

Rate: No

Bolsa Chica Land Trust

Total cost:	$11-32 million	Total Acres:	49
WRP Request:	$3,000,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	49

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Bolsa Chica Land Trust submits this proposal for acquisition of 49 acres (Shea Parkside) at Bolsa Chica. Historically part of the Bolsa Chica wetlands, it could function as a wetland buffer for flooding, as a wildlife habitat, and as a natural treatment basin for treating dry-weather urban runoff as a filter for pollutants.

Project Review:
The proposed acquisition would supplement the Bolsa Chica restoration project. The parcel could potentially be used for a treatment wetland/flood detention basin for the EGGW channel which would improve water quality in the Bolsa wetlands. Estimated cost per acre is very high ($225,000-$715,000 per acre), in part because the property is zoned residential. Despite potential benefits, at that price the opportunity cost is too high. Money could be spent better elsewhere. There is not clear evidence that the property owner is a willing seller.

14. Bolsa Chica Channel Treatment Wetlands

Rate: No

County of Orange

Total cost:	$1,700,000	Total Acres:	23.6
WRP Request:	$380,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	23.6

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
A treatment wetlands systems will be constructed to treat dry season runoff in Bolsa Chica Channel. The project will improve water quality for the Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge, Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, Huntington Harbor, and Anaheim Bay, and may be able to provide a source of fresh water for wetlands restoration projects on the Naval Weapons Station and/or Refuge.

Project Review:
Proposal does not provide much information about the project. Primary objective of project is to improve water quality, and bulk of funding would be from Water Board. Unclear how much benefit the project would have for Seal Beach NWR or Bolsa Chica wetlands.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Does existing water quality from Bolsa Channel impact the Seal Beach Wildlife Refuge or other coastal resources? Provide evidence.	County
2. Proposal cites removal rates for Cd, Cr, and Cu. Is water in the Bolsa Channel currently listed as impaired for Cd, Cr, Cu? Are current levels above ecological risk levels?	County
3. What are the watershed sources for pollutants in Bolsa Channel and what measures are or will be taken to control them before entering the channel?	County
4. Literature removal efficiencies cited in proposal are not accurate because actual performance depends upon the load entering the specific wetland and the soil and local climate conditions. Need project specific estimates of removal efficiencies (including methodology).	County
5. What will happen to the water after it goes through the treatment wetland?	County
6. Has the NWS agreed to let the County use its right of way along the channel?	County

Recommend County complete the plan. If the planned project will truly benefit wetland resources, County should submit a proposal for construction funding and provide sufficient information to address all of the above questions.

15. El Dorado Regional Park Wetlands Feasibility Study

Rate: Yes

City of Long Beach

Incubator

Total cost:	$147,000	Total Acres:	500
WRP Request:	$140,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	tbd

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
A study to determine the technological and biological feasibility of the restoration of treatment wetlands and stream corridors in El Dorado Regional Park and the South of Willow site along the San Gabriel River and Coyote Creek in Long Beach. The goal of the study is to increase wetlands habitat along the River and Creek, provide for groundwater recharge, increase hydrologic function in the Park lakes and streams, enhance passive recreation and educational opportunities, reduce dependency on potable water, and to enhance water quality in the San Gabriel River, including the ocean/river tidal area.

Project Review:
The primary habitat benefits of the project would occur on the triangular parcel south of Willow which is currently covered in ruderal species. North of Willow, the primary benefit of the project would be to replace the use of potable water in the park's lake/stream system with water from the San Gabriel River. El Dorado Park has been identified as a priority area for restoration/ enhancement in the San Gabriel River Master Plan currently in development by the County of Los Angeles. There is reasonably good (for the LA basin) terrestrial habitat connectivity between El Dorado Park and the Los Cerritos Wetlands. A Master Plan for the park has already been prepared and a conceptual plan for the project is included in the SGR Master Plan. The proposed study, which would be at a conceptual level, appears to be redundant. City should be ready to prepare a preliminary plan; however, the proposed budget does not seem sufficient for a preliminary plan. The RMC will contribute $100,000 to this project.

WRP funding should prioritize the triangular parcel south of Willow. Sufficient funds should be provided to ensure that the project results in a valuable product.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Provide copy of Master Plan to SCC.	City
2. Outline an efficient process to move from the current master plan to implementation. Determine if the proposed Feasibility Study is needed.	City/SCC/ RMC
3. Revise the study scope of work and budget to ensure a useful product that will prepare the project for final design and construction.	City/SCC/ RMC
4. Clarify whether the City will have rights to the San Gabriel River water to ensure its long-term availability.	City
5. City staff seems overloaded already. Explore other options for project management to ensure project moves along expeditiously.	City/SCC/ RMC
6. Coordinate project planning with ACOE Coyote Creek Watershed Feasibility Study to avoid redundancy.	City

16. Rio Hondo Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds

Rate: No

Central Basin Municipal Water District

Total cost:	$100,000	Total Acres:	30
WRP Request:	$37,500	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	TBD

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Complete a detailed feasibility study for constructed wetlands on an approximately 30-acre site located adjacent to the Rio Hondo Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds. The feasibility study will include site reconnaissance and characterization, regulatory requirements, alternate options, conceptual design, and preliminary cost estimates.

Project Review:
The primary purpose of this project is to expand the area of groundwater recharge. The project would include a vegetative fringe around the recharge basin. The proposal does not provide sufficient information to evaluate the relative value of wetlands creation in this area. The proposed project area is already paved, which will make project implementation relatively expensive. In the planning phase, the project has strong matching funds.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Determine the relative value of wetlands creation at this site. Is it identified as a priority in the Wetlands of the Los Angeles River Study, Rio Hondo Watershed Management Plan, or other relevant document? Is there any other habitat area in the vicinity?	CBWMD
2. Who owns the property?	CBWMD
3. What funding sources have been identified for implementation phase?	CBWMD
4. Can habitat benefits be increased while still maintaining recharge function?	SCC/ CBWMD

Recommend that West Basin and Central Basin MWD work with the WRP to prioritize potential areas for wetlands creation/groundwater recharge and explore options for improving habitat gains beyond a vegetative fringe. Based on this work, a revised proposal could be submitted to the WRP in the future.

17. Dominguez Gap Wetlands Multiuse Project

County of Los Angeles Public Works Department

Rate: combine with DeForest project

Total cost:	$3,300,000	Total Acres:	37
WRP Request:	$2,300,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	37

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The goal of this project is to develop the Dominguez Gap Spreading Grounds into a functional, multipurpose wetlands that incorporates flood control, passive recreation, habitat enhancement, groundwater recharge, and public education.

Project Review:
Proposed project is one link in a chain of contiguous wetlands alongside the Los Angeles River that could potentially extend inland from the coast for four miles. This system of wetlands is one of the best opportunities for wetlands restoration along the LA River. The Dominguez Gap project is being carried out in partnership with the City of Long Beach's DeForest Park Wetlands Restoration Project which is already on the WRP Work Plan. These two projects together will create a contiguous 3-mile corridor of wetlands and upland habitat. The project will achieve multiple benefits including habitat creation, water quality improvement, stormwater detention, groundwater recharge, and recreation/access.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. What is the combined cost estimate for Dominguez and DeForest for 1) design/permitting; and 2) construction?	County/City

Recommend that the Dominguez Gap and DeForest Park projects be combined into one project on the Work Plan.

18. South Los Angeles Wetland Park

Rate: No

City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation

Total cost:	$5,000,000	Total Acres:	18
WRP Request:	$4,000,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	4

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The project calls for the development of detention ponds and constructed wetlands in the south Los Angeles area of the City. Neighborhood storm drains will be modified to allow dry weather flow and a portion of the wet weather flow to be diverted into a 1 million-gallon underground storage tank.

Project Review:
This project is very expensive ($1.25 million/wetland acre) for minimal habitat gains. The site is completely surrounded by urban development with no connection to any waterway. The project would achieve multiple benefits, including water quality improvement, stormwater detention, groundwater recharge, and education potential. It is unclear what type of wetland would be created, and thus the relative habitat gains.

19. Arroyo de las Pasas Restoration

Rate: Yes.

North East Trees

Total cost:	$208,620	Total Acres:	6.5
WRP Request:	$185,880	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	2.5

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Completion of technical studies and detailed design drawings for restoration of historical creek and wetland. Includes permitting.

Project Review:
Project site was identified in the Wetlands of the Los Angeles River as one of the high priority opportunities in the watershed for wetlands restoration. The site is already used by migratory birds, and improving habitat quality would have clear benefit. Project area is located near a science magnet school. Project has significant community interest and involvement.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Phase 2 CEQA is mentioned in the text, but not in the scope of budget. Proposal is correct that planning phase is exempt from CEQA, but planning phase should include preparation of a CEQA document for implementation phase.	NET/SCC
2. What are the contaminant issues at the site?	NET
3. Is the site paved? If so, how big an area? This will significantly affect the implementation costs.	NET
4. Need a better regional map showing project context.	NET
5. Who will maintain the site in the long-term? Has the entity made this commitment.	NET

20. White Point Park Stream Restoration Project

Rate: No

City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation

Total cost:	$1,800,000	Total Acres:	102
WRP Request:	$1,500,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	1

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The project will restore part of White Point Park by reestablishing original contours and planting vegetation. In addition, a wetland will be constructed within the park to treat urban runoff pollution from the surrounding drainage area, and to provide a freshwater wetland habitat for wetland habitat associated wildlife species.

Project Review:
The project would create upland and limited riparian habitat in an underserved, very urban environment. The primary focus of the wetland portion of the project is water quality; however, the proposal provides little information about the water quality issues. Proposal is unclear as to whether the stream will be realigned, recontoured, or created. $1.5 million for 1 acre of wetland is far too expensive.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Restoration work is already underway at the site, and most of the site has already been planted with coastal sage scrub species. Not clear what this proposal is for.	City
2. Is this budget for the wetland or the whole park? Budget is for construction money when there is no plan yet.	City
3. Verify whether stream currently exists on site. If so, why does it need a new alignment?	City
4. Provide more detail about water quality issues – non-point source pollution entering or exiting park, specific pollutants of concern, relative contribution of contaminants to LA Harbor from project watershed, upstream efforts to reduce contaminants, etc.	City
5. How would the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy fund long-term maintenance of the park?	City/PVPLC
6. Need a map showing project location within the region.	City

21. Machado Lake Habitat Restoration Project

Rate: Yes

City of Los Angeles

Total cost:	$300,000	Total Acres:	103.5
WRP Request:	$300,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	103.5

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Machado Lake, approximately 103.5 acres next to the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro is an indispensable and important remnant of wetlands along the Pacific Flyway that can bioremediate, filter water, and provide valuable needed habitat. The South Coast Regional Commission of the California Coastal Conservation Commission has designated it as a Class 1 priority freshwater marsh. This proposed project is to prepare an overall revegetation planting plan including exotics removal, design for a temporary irrigation system for vegetation establishment, runoff prevention practices, and specific planting and maintenance procedures.

Project Review:
The project area is one of the best opportunities for wetland enhancement/restoration in the LA coastal plain. This phase of project is for planning (although the proposal makes it sound like it is implementation). Project has strong community interest and involvement. The park has been identified as a priority for an Audubon Nature Center. Proposal has no matching funds at this phase of the project, but has applied to SWRCB for implementation funds. City is using Prop. K funds to prepare EIR for Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park Master Plan.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. There is strong community interest in this project. The City needs to keep the Public Advisory Board involved in all stages of the project.	City

22. Devil's Dip Creek Restoration and Daylighting

Rate: Yes

North East Trees

Total cost:	$248,925	Total Acres:	120
WRP Request:	$239,025	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	2.32

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Design from Conceptual Design through Construction Documents for the restoration and daylighting of the Devil's Dip Creek at the Chester Washington Golf Course.

Project Review:
Proposed project has two main elements – enhancement of existing stream corridor through golf course and daylighting and restoration of buried portion of creek. Habitat gains would be small, but could be good opportunity for educating community on better stewardship of creek. Would be relatively inexpensive for a creek daylighting project since creek is not buried below concrete; however, daylighting creeks is always expensive.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Identify credible sources of funding for the implementation phase. • County should contribute some funding since sink holes caused by creek are disrupting course • DWR urban streams restoration program?	NET/County
2. Is this a high priority for creek daylighting in LA basin? Will it serve well as a demonstration project?	NET/SCC
3. Determine how conflicts between golf course use and management and wetland habitat would be resolved (e.g., pesticides, fertilizers, vegetation maintenance, etc.)	NET/SCC/ County

Recommend only pursuing the above ground enhancement elements at this stage. The daylighting portions of the project can be re-evaluated after SCC and NET develop a more comprehensive strategy for approaching creek daylighting in LA basin (see comments on review of project #26).

23. Bellflower Park

Rate: No

Central Basin Municipal Water District

Total cost:	$100,000	Total Acres:	13
WRP Request:	$62,500	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	TBD

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Complete a detailed feasibility study for constructed wetlands on two separate sites totaling approximately 13-acres and located in the City of Bellflower. The feasibility study will include site reconnaissance and characterization, regulatory requirements, alternate options, conceptual design, and preliminary cost estimates.

Project Review:
Proposed project would create up to 13 acres of wetlands adjacent to the San Gabriel River. The primary objectives of the project are not clear – water quality improvement, habitat creation, recreation? The proposal does not clarify whether this area has been identified as a priority by any of the planning efforts along the San Gabriel River.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Clarify the goals and objectives of the project.	CBMWD
2. Determine whether this area is identified as a priority in the LADPW San Gabriel River Master Plan or other relevant document.	CBMWD
3. Need a regional map showing surrounding resources.	CBMWD
4. Identify potential funding sources for implementation phase based on the goals of the project.	CBMWD

If this project has been identified as a priority in the San Gabriel River Master Plan, the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy plan, or another credible document addressing wetlands habitat in the watershed, then the applicant may want to submit a revised proposal for funding. Any future proposal should address the above issues and provide more detailed information about the project.

24. Gardena Willows Wetland Enhancement

Rate: No

City of Gardena

Total cost:	$300,000	Total Acres:	2
WRP Request:	$300,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	13

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Purpose of the project is to build a nature center to inform and educate the public on the value of protecting the wetlands and, ultimately, the ocean. The project will also enhance the upland area immediately adjacent to the wetlands by removing invasive exotic plant materials and replacing them with native materials that will increase habitat for native species.

Project Review:
The primary purpose of this project is to construct a nature center. The habitat gains would be minimal, although the project site is one of the best wetland areas in the Dominguez channel watershed. Proposal does not include any matching funds, but the city has contributed to earlier phases of work at the wetlands. Acreage numbers provided by the applicant do not make sense.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Proposal indicates that West Basin MWD may want to provide reclaimed water to flush the site during dry months. Under natural conditions, would the site be dry in the dry months? If so, would flushing it create opportunity for exotic species? What is the motivation of WBMWD to provide reclaimed water to the project site?	City

Recommend that City work with WRP to identify potential opportunities for collaborating on the enhancement of the wetlands.

25. Ballona Wetlands West Bluffs Acquisition

Rate: No

Ballona Ecosystem Education Project

Total cost:	$35,000,000	Total Acres:	44
WRP Request:	$2,000,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	4

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
We are raising money to acquire the only remaining natural bluff that is a critical component of the Ballona wetlands. The Ballona wetlands are the last large coastal wetlands in Los Angeles County.

Project Review:
Property would provide upland habitat contiguous with the Ballona wetlands ecosystem. It is not clear how much this upland habitat would benefit the wetland ecosystem. The project is very expensive ($795,000/acre) because the land is already entitled. The proposal does not present a plan for future land ownership or management. No matching funds have been secured.

State resources agencies have agreed that 1) acquisition of wetlands is first and highest priority in the area; and 2) the opportunity cost of this property is too high – the money can be better spent elsewhere.

26. Stream Spirit Rising: Restoration Education and Design of North Branch Creek

North East Trees

Rate: Make part of So. Cal. Creek Daylighting Program

Total cost:	$334,740	Total Acres:	17
WRP Request:	$334,740	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	0.5

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Community and school outreach program focusing on the historical North Branch Creek and its environs, culminating in a celebratory creek walk and public artwork. Design drawings and permitting to daylight the North Branch creek.

Project Review:
Project would build community support and involvement for daylighting a portion of North Branch Creek. Actual implementation of this project would be far in the future and at this stage is highly speculative. Daylighting creeks is relatively new territory for the WRP (although we have funded one such project in Encinitas). In the long-run, daylighting creeks in the LA basin may be one of the best ways to restore functioning of the coastal watersheds. But these projects are costly and any long-term, sustained effort to daylight the basin's creeks will need to be funded through the local economy. However, the WRP could play a role in building a vision and support for a long-term creek daylighting effort, which could include funding some demonstration projects.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Determine if this a high priority for creek daylighting in LA basin. Will it serve well as a demonstration project?	NET/SCC
2. Need a better regional map that shows the surrounding resources mentioned in proposal.	NET

Recommend that the **Southern California Creek Daylighting Program** be added to the WRP Work Plan. Under this project, a comprehensive strategy for approaching creek daylighting in southern California should be developed, with a more detailed analysis of the Los Angeles basin. This strategy must address long-term funding. The strategy should identify and rate potential demonstration projects based on several factors including potential for community outreach and education, furthering of multiple objectives, and relation to long-term funding strategy. If the Stream Spirit Rising project rates well in this analysis, WRP should fund outreach and conceptual planning for project as part of the Creek Daylighting Program. More detailed design should not be funded until potential for future implementation is less speculative.

27. Potrero Canyon Riparian Habitat Restoration Project

Rate: No

City of Los Angeles

Total cost:	$12,000,000	Total Acres:	30
WRP Request:	$2,000,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	7.38

Project Summary (provided by applicant):

Potrero Canyon Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is 30 acres located immediately uphill of Will Rogers State Beach Park on Santa Monica Bay. The project is the final phase of a multi-year and multi-phase endeavor to stabilize a previously collapsed coastal bluff system, bioremediate urban runoff, restore and expand valuable wildlife habitat in a coastal canyon along the Pacific Flyway.

Project Review:

This project would recreate a stream that was buried when a coastal canyon was filled to protect a neighboring housing development. It is required as mitigation for filling the canyon, which makes it ineligible for WRP funding.

28. Topanga Creek Restoration Program

Rate: Yes

RCD of the Santa Monica Mountains

Total cost:	$180,000	Total Acres:	12400
WRP Request:	$180,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	15

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The Topanga Creek Restoration Program builds upon the foundation of previous studies to further the coordinated planning and implementation of identified priority restoration projects within the Topanga Creek Watershed.

Project Review:
The Topanga Creek Restoration Program is a long-term effort to implement the recommendations of the Topanga Creek and Lagoon Restoration Feasibility Study which was funded by the WRP. At the Conservancy's request, the RCD submitted a proposal to put the Topanga Creek Restoration Program on the WRP Work Plan as a long-term programmatic effort. Within this restoration program, the RCD is recommending two specific projects be pursued at this time: a hydrogeology study and removal of an illegally-placed berm in the creek bottom. A major focus of the hydrogeology study will be to assess the impacts of a potential road-widening project by CalTrans at the "Narrows." Therefore, it might be possible to wait and get CalTrans to pay for the study. Topanga Creek is the second largest watershed in the Santa Monica Mountains and supports a small population of steelhead trout. There is high quality riparian habitat along much of the creek. State Parks is currently developing a management plan for the 1400 acres of the lower watershed that it acquired a few years ago.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. It is not clear how the proposed berm removal project will affect or be affected by State Parks plans for the property. Is the berm removal project being coordinated with State Parks?	RCD/DPR

Recommend adding the Topanga Creek Restoration Program to the WRP Work Plan, and then tasking the Coastal Conservancy to work with the RCD on the next steps and the appropriate time for implementing them. Recommend funding the hydrogeology study now rather than waiting for CalTrans to fund it. This will ensure that the study is done earlier in the planning process and to a quality that meets our satisfaction. The Conservancy should provide periodic updates to the Managers Group and Board of Governors on specific projects being pursued under this program.

29. Cold Creek Acquisition, Phase 3

Rate: No

Mountains Restoration Trust

Total cost:	$4,668,500	Total Acres:	196.16
WRP Request:	$1,205,500	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	0

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Phase 3 acquires 196.16 acres of riparian corridor and upslope watershed made up of chaparral, coastal sage scrub, willow riparian, oak woodland, rock outcrops, seeps and wetlands. When combined with the 107.07 acres of Phase 2 (on the 2002 Work Plan), the 303.23 acres completes the Cold Creek Restoration Plan the goal of which is the maximum protection of Cold Creek.

Project Review:
Project would acquire additional lands in the Cold Creek watershed. The Cold Creek watershed runs roughly parallel to the coast and provides a link between the Topanga and Malibu Creek watersheds. The importance of this habitat connection between the two watersheds is not clear. Price per acre is relatively low ($23,800/acre). The WRP contributed to phase 1 of acquisition in the Cold Creek preserve, and phase 2 is currently on the Work Plan. Matching funds have not been confirmed for phase 3.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. What are the WRP's priorities in the Santa Monica Mountains region? Is this one of them? Are there other priority areas with projects ready for funding?	SCC/WMG
2. How were Phase 3 sites targeted?	MRT
3. How many phases are there? Provide a map showing all phases – past and future.	MRT
4. How many acres of riparian habitat are there in phase 3?	MRT
5. What agency is the source of the HCF funds? Land and Water Conservation Funds?	MRT

Recommend that the Conservancy fund a study to identify WRP priorities in the Santa Monica Mountains region. Study would be based on existing riparian and wetland habitat, use by rare species, connections to large protected habitat areas, priorities established by other agencies/NGOs working in the area, etc. Decision on whether to add this project to the Work Plan should be postponed until study is complete. In the meantime, MRT should complete Phase 2.

30. Escondido Falls Acquisition

Rate: No

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

Total cost:	$618,350	Total Acres:	51
WRP Request:	$443,350	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	1.5

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The project consists of the acquisition and permanent protection of approximately 51 acres within the Escondido Canyon watershed. Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority would own the land and manage it in conjunction with MRCA's adjacent Escondido Canyon Park.

Project Review:
Project area appears to support good quality habitat, but not much of it is wetland. Property is contiguous with an existing park and close to protected open space in Zuma and Trancas Canyons. Price per acre is very low ($12,100/acre). Project does not further any of the three highest priorities identified for regional goal 2 (Preserve and restore stream corridors and wetland ecosystems in coastal watersheds.).

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. What are the WRP's priorities in the Santa Monica Mountains region? Is this one of them? Are there other priority areas with projects ready for funding?	SCC/WMG

If WRP wants to consider this project despite limited wetland habitat, recommend that decision on whether to add this project to the Work Plan should be postponed until Santa Monica Mountains study is complete (see Cold Creek project review (#29)).

31. Arroyo Conejo/Arroyo Santa Rosa Riparian Habitat Project

Rate: Yes

County of Ventura

Incubator

Total cost:	$3,500,000	Total Acres:	15
WRP Request:	$3,500,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	21

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
To further develop and implement a concept studied by the California State Coastal Conservancy in 2000, this project increases by 15 acres the wetlands and riparian habitat on land owned by the County of Ventura at the outlet of Hill Canyon in the Santa Rosa Valley. The wetlands will reduce water pollutants, velocity, and erosion to benefit the entire streamway down to Mugu Lagoon, while providing diversified habitat that connects to 3500 acres of publicly owned natural open space.

Project Review:
Project is one of the ten priority wetland projects identified in the Calleguas Watershed Management plan. Restoration costs are rather high for a riparian project ($233,000/acre). Proposal does not clarify whether there is a plan yet or not. If not, proposal should be for planning money, not implementation money.

Proposal is poorly written with information in incorrect sections of the proposal, making it difficult to follow.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Provide project plan. If one doesn't exist yet, develop a scope of work and budget for preparing a plan.	County/SCC
2. Need to secure significant matching funds. County has applied for SWRCB funds.	County
3. Proposal states that Watershed Protection District will contribute $750,000 to an independent portion of the project. This funding is mitigation for impacts elsewhere in the watershed. What is proposed for the mitigation area? Where is the mitigation area?	County
4. Provide map showing the connection to 3500 acres of protected open space referenced in the proposal.	County

Recommend that the County work with the Conservancy and Morgan Wehtje of the Department of Fish and Game to further develop the project concept.

32. Hedrick Ranch Nature Area Restoration Project

Rate: Yes

Friends of the Santa Clara River

Total cost:	$649,000	Total Acres:	223
WRP Request:	$649,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	34

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Initiate restoration and enhancement of key portions of the 223 acre riparian preserve under stewardship of The Friends of The Santa Clara River as recommended by Management and Restoration Plan

Project Review:
Project area is along the Santa Clara River, approximately 15 miles from the coast. Twelve listed species and 50 species of concern are known to use the property. The property was acquired as part of the Santa Clara River Parkway project. There are no matching funds identified; however, the project could potentially receive Santa Clara River Trustee Council funds. Original proposal did not provide much detail on project description, but supplementary information is much more thorough. Project budget can probably be trimmed.

33. Ventura Harbor Wetlands Public Art Project

Rate: No

City of Ventura

Total cost:	$4,216,000	Total Acres:	50
WRP Request:	$518,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	50

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Aspects of the Ventura Harbor Wetlands Project that will be requested for consideration for the WRP Work Plan include: 1) native plant and habitat restoration work at the fifty acre wetland pond area that is a component of the City of Ventura Water Reclamation Facility, as well as, 2) public access and circulation.

Project Review:
Habitat gains appear to minimal. Proposal is focused more on aesthetics than habitat. For example, the plant palette would be selected by an artist, not an ecologist. Project area is contiguous with the Santa Clara River Estuary and is used extensively by waterfowl. A small component of the $4.2 million project is for invasives removal. Sources for majority of matching funds ($2,958,000) have not been identified. WRP has higher priorities within the Santa Clara River watershed.

34. Mission Creek Red Cross Project

Rate: No

Santa Barbara Urban Creeks Council

Total cost:	$58,000	Total Acres:	0.3
WRP Request:	$39,500	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The planning phase includes site assessment, design development, agency approval and permitting preparatory to implementation of bank restoration, filter and bioswale installation, habitat restoration, and flooding protection measures. Installation of interpretative exhibits and creek overlooks emphasized, utilizing the strong educational and demonstration potential that is offered at the site. The project is sponsored by the Mission Creek Restoration Partnership.

Project Review:
The proposed project addresses 110 feet of stream. Habitat and stream functioning gains would be negligible. Planning costs equate to $2.78 million per mile. It is inefficient and costly to do such a small project.

Recommend that project be integrated into other efforts along Mission Creek and a proposal for a larger, more meaningful and cost-effective project be submitted to the WRP at a future time.

35. Arroyo Burro Restoration at Las Positas

Rate: Yes

City of Santa Barbara

Incubator

Total cost:	$190,000	Total Acres:	6
WRP Request:	$90,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	tbd

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The proposed project is to develop conceptual design plans, perform constraints and feasibility analysis and complete final preliminary plans for a creek restoration project on Arroyo Burro through a community consensus based approach.

Project Review:
The proposed project would improve riparian habitat upstream of Arroyo Burro estuary. The project also has good potential for education and community involvement. Arroyo Burro has been identified as a priority creek by the WRP Task Force. Planning costs seem high for a 6 acre park. The City of Santa Barbara would provide matching funds. This project has potential, but there are many questions that need to be addressed.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. Not clear how all of the projects in the watershed relate. • Are they being coordinated? • It seems like they are being piecemealed. Would there be economies of scale by combining them? • Proposal references a creek visioning process. Shouldn't this be completed before pursuing this project? • How does proposed project relate to the proposals submitted to SWRCB for Arroyo Burro creek?	City/SCC
2. Does Arroyo Burro Creek support steelhead?	City
3. Need a map showing the areas discussed in first paragraph of site description	City
4. How much development is possible on the 140 acre parcel?	City
5. What is the status of the City's review of development proposal for the 11 acres? If restoration is required as part of the development, why should WRP fund it?	City
6. Why is the city preparing conceptual design plans (step 2) before completing a constraints analysis (step 3)?	City

36. Ellwood Mesa Property Acquisition

Rate: No

Trust for Public Land

Total cost:	$20,400,000	Total Acres:	137
WRP Request:	not specified	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	40

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
The Trust for Public Land, in partnership with the City of Goleta, seeks to purchase the Ellwood Mesa property for the dual purposes of habitat preservation and passive public recreation, including beach access. The acquisition of Ellwood Mesa is embodied in the Joint Proposal for the Ellwood-Devereux Coast, which is an approved WRP Work Plan planning project.

Project Review:
The subject property contains vernal pool and grassland habitat. In addition, a grove of eucalyptus trees provides habitat for monarch butterflies. The proposed acquisition includes a payment of $20.4 million plus swap of 38 acres of land which is currently part of a City park (formerly a county park). Cost per acre is high ($149,000/acre – not accounting for the land-swap value). The Ellwood property is often referred to as the "gateway to Gaviota"; however, it has already been leapfrogged by development and no longer represents the urban/rural boundary. The most recent development proposal for the property did not directly impact the vernal pools or eucalyptus habitat. TPL has raised over $6 million from the community and is seeking the remaining funding from other sources, none of which has been confirmed.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. WRP needs to develop acquisition and restoration priorities for the Gaviota coast.	WRP/SCC

The opportunity cost of this project is too high. Money could be spent better elsewhere.

37. Lower Refugio Creek Restoration

Rate: Yes

Land Trust for Santa Barbara County

Total cost:	$157,000	Total Acres:	7
WRP Request:	$112,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	

Project Summary (provided by applicant):

The Land Trust, in partnership with three agricultural landowners and the Cachuma Resource Conservation District, propose to complete a riparian restoration project on lower Refugio Creek. The goal of this project is to dramatically improve the wildlife value along one and one-half miles of the creek by: (a) removing more than 100 separate patches of the highly invasive weed Arundo donax (giant reed) and smaller areas of invasive castor bean, ivy, false tobacco and Kudzu vine; (b) stabilizing several major erosion features; and (c) revegetating 17,000 square feet of the riparian corridor with approximately 900 native trees, shrubs and understory plants; (d) up to four years of post-installation monitoring, re-treatment and replacement planting to ensure a successful outcome.

Project Review:

Project would implement an enhancement plan prepared with funding from the WRP small grants program. Project will address creek issues from the coast, inland to the Los Padres National Forest. Project has willing participation by private landowners and could encourage better long-term stewardship of the creek by the landowners. Creek was not one of the higher priority streams identified in the CCP steelhead barrier study. Proposed project would improve aquatic habitat quality which could improve its relative priority. Proposal does not discuss feasibility of removing steelhead passage barriers.

Issues to be addressed:	**By who?**
1. What are the steelhead barriers on the creek? What is the feasibility of removing them?	LTSBC

38. San Dieguito Lagoon Wetland Acquisition -- Boudreau Property

Rate: Yes

San Dieguito River Park JPA

Total cost:	$2,510,000	Total Acres:	75
WRP Request:	$2,000,000	Post Proj. Wetland Acres:	11.25

Project Summary (provided by applicant):
Acquisition of 75 acres of land, known as the Boudreau floodplain property, located east of and immediately adjacent to the 400-acre San Dieguito Wetland Restoration Project.

Project Review:
The proposed acquisition would complement the San Dieguito Lagoon Restoration project that will be implemented as mitigation by Southern California Edison. The property is located within the San Dieguito River floodplain and could offer a substantial increase in native grassland/ seasonal salt marsh habitat to the lagoon ecosystem. The property is currently used for agricultural production. If not acquired for conservation purposes, the property will likely be acquired for soccer field construction. Acquisition of this property should be a high priority for the WRP since it will expand the protected habitat of a coastal wetland system. The cost per acre ($33,466/acre) is very reasonable.